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CATALINA

THE SPANISH NUN

& OTHER POEMS

BY

J. WIMSETT BOULDING.

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CATALINA, THE SPANISH NUN.

CATALINA,

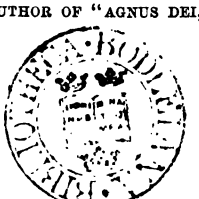
THE SPANISH NUN;

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

J. WIMSETT BOULDING,

AUTHOR OF "AGNUS DEI," ETC.



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CATALINA,

OR,

THE SPANISH NUN.

In the sixteenth century's wane, in the Town Saint Sebastian,
The wife of a Noble provokëd her husband's displeasure
By adding a beautiful girl to the Flowers of their Love-Tree,
Already o'erstocked, as he judged, with feminine blossoms.
"For what is a maiden worth save to absorb the bright sunbeams,

And dazzle men's eyes that they see not the stern road of duty?

To a nunnery go! and, hid from the view of the peccable,

Give your charms to the Heavens that cannot be tempted of evil.

Naught bring ye but care, and contraction of means of enjoyment,

Unfit for the sword or the plough, ye cumber the vineyard,

Draining the parent soil of its wealth and giving back nothing.

O blessèd Religion that comes with so kind a provision

To nobles, whom Nature hath richly encumbered with daughters!

Well may she say, 'Of my graces is charity chiefest!'"

In such strain thought old Don Erauso as he took the fair flower

To the convent of good Saint Sebastian, and gave her to God and the angels.

The Lady Abbess took the child
And blessed it in her fervour mild ;
And praised the father's pious deed,
And prophesied his future meed—
A daughter's unpolluted years—
Religious deeds, availing tears—
Fruits of the convent's calm restraint,
Maturing in the virgin saint.

The nuns all stood admiring by,
Like saintly star-groups in the sky,
When some new world is sent by God
Into their peaceful sisterhood ;
Some praised, some pitied, but all blessed,
And fervently their faith professed,
That coming years would prove their care
Had served an angel unaware.

The sire forgot his heart's complaint,
And felt *himself* a wondrous saint ;

The convent's praise had changed his trick—
So worldly-wise and politic—
Planned to economize his pelf—
Into a sacrifice of self,
And he, disburdened of his load,
Professed he gave it up for God.

Her sire called her "Pussy:" the nuns named her
"Kate"—
"Catalina" in Spain: surely christened by Fate!
For the ominous freaks of this sweet little saint,
Like a kitten's, or cub's! defied every restraint.

Old Time danced along with a rollicking speed,
And his footstep was light as a sylph's on the mead:
Nor convent, nor chapel, nor abbess, nor nun,
Could subdue little Kitty's sad liking for fun.

She went to the chapel—but 'twas not to pray:
She counted her beads—alas, only in play!

And she practised so many sweet, laughable airs
That the nuns had hard work to get safe thro' their
prayers.

She tortured their sides with her wit's pleasant
pokes,
Not one but a martyr was made to her jokes:
Yet who could help loving her antics so wild?
For nuns are but women, and Kate was a child.

The maiden grew up alike lovely and tall;
Too fair and too high for a nunnery wall;
And she looked on the earth, and she gazed o'er the
sea,
And a thousand bright things whispered "Sister, be
free."

The hill-camping clouds, and the wild gipsy winds,
And the waves of the ocean, like earth's myriad
minds,

She heard crying out, "Sister, come forth and roam!"
And the heart of the maiden said "Comrades, I come!

"For my kindred is all that is noble and brave—
Earth's only damned spot is the cell of a slave:
I can sleep in the forest, and drink of the flood,
For nothing degrades but a vice in the blood."

It was the hour of evening prayer,
And through the minster's solemn air
The organ's notes were pealing;
And rising up, the incense cloud
Covered the heads in worship bowed,
Like an incorporate feeling;
And priest and acolyte and nun
Had every thought absorbed in one—
To offer up devotion.
But Kate, alas, her lack of grace!
Employed this most religious space
To get herself in motion.

It chanced—for women's wits will roam—
Her aunt* had left her book at home,
And who could ever think of praying,
Or praying, hope to find his God
Unless a printer shew the road?
But may I be absolved for saying
That supplications in a frame
Are but the crutches of the lame,
The strong can stand without them!
The pious cannot choose but pray;
By instinct sure they know the way
Though errors teem about them.

The lady sent her niece in haste,
And bade her not a moment waste;
In the drawer
Of the scrutoire
She had only to look,
And the precious old Book

* *The Lady* Superior was Catalina's aunt.

She would see right before her!—She went. It was there:
And there something more—the old bundle of keys,
The instruments vile of those cruel decrees
Which had furled her young sails from the free ocean breeze,
And they said to her heart, "Maiden, never despair."

Back she ran, and delivered the book and the key;
And showed signs of reluctance to punish her knee,
On account of a pain in her head.
Her aunt, gracious lady! straight gave her a kiss,
(Had Kate ever known such a moment of bliss?)
And sent her away to her bed.
Ye nuns, saw ye not a strange twink in her eye,
As the freedom-sick maiden went hurriedly by?
Saw ye naught that recalled her old antics and airs?
But how could ye see? you were saying your prayers!

She locked the saints in;
And 'twas surely no sin
To imprison them there,
In that thrice-blessed place of religion and prayer!
Her aunt's purse she reft;
And 'twas surely no theft
In such a good cause
To purloin a small coin! for Liberty's laws
Are older than monarch and greater than priest;
And when Force has begun, Obligation has ceased.

Ere vespers were done
Had sped the young nun,
In the joy of release,
Like a bird from its cage, to the forest's wild peace:
On the leaves of the trees,
Soothed by songs of the breeze,
She lay down to rest,
Like a bird in its humble but innocent nest:

And the stars, dumb detectives, that winked through
the tree,
Shed down their kind dews on the sleep of the free.

When the cock gave his warning,
That rosy-cheeked Morning
Was lifting her head from her pillows of mist,
Our rosy-cheeked Kate,
Alive to her state,
Prepared to defeat their pursuit of the missed :
Nor long had she quitted her paradise-bed
Ere with scissors and needle and two skeins of thread
Her petticoat grew,
In the day's early view,
To a pair of fine trowsers—a fit quite as true,
I dare say, as any the tailors could do ;
Though, to give them their meed,
They always succeed !
At his suit of fine "black" what swell ever looked
"blue ?"

The nun thus arrayed,

Not a moment delayed

Her flight to resume; and her plans were soon made.

She knew that her mother

Was blest with a brother

Who lived at Vittoria. Thither she flew:

She found this relation,

Who, with salutation,

Received his young *nephew* in charity true!

But, alas for poor Kate!

How cross-grained was Fate!

She loved the free wind:

And he—*conjugation*,

'Twas worse than a matin

To be talking Latin;

And a dinner of herbs,

Unencumbered with verbs,

Was better than ox with a grammar-plagued mind:

Or a draught from the brook

Without bead or book

Than a bottle of wine,
And a noun to decline:
So, without his leave asking,
Or giving him warning,
She *took* a small sum for his ceaseless verb-tasking,
And bade him "Good morning."

She hastened with speed
To Valladolid:
Though a carrier's van,
To a dashing young man,
Neither squares with his notions of splendour or pace.
But Kate doubtless thought
All pageantry nought
That was more than the frame of a paramount grace:
And having the latter,
It did not much matter,
The glory is not in the gilt but the face.

At Valladolid the king was staying;
And national bands were marching and playing;
And Kate's warrior-blood leaped like fire through her veins,
At the soul-stirring blasts of those proud martial strains:
And her virgin breast swelled, and her eye it flashed fire:
And lo! making mock of her novel attire,
Some scoundrels presumëd to challenge her ire,
By pelting with stones the poor maid.
She turned round, and faced the flint storm undismayed;
And slain every one
Had the valiant young nun,
If the unrighteous law had not come to their aid.
Let cowards prevail!
Send the hero to jail!
So little do virtue and valour avail.
But a young cavalier,
From a balcony near,
Had watched the affray,
And *was 'bold*ened to say

That the prisoner was clear
Of this breach of the peace.
And on her release
He proposed to engage
The fair victor as page:
And in all his long train of the gay and the grave
He could boast no attendant so handsome and brave

The maiden was drest
In a blue velvet vest,
And she waited his call
In the Don's marble hall;
And her work it was meet;
And her rest it was sweet;
And she drank of the wine
Of the best-blooded vine:
There was nothing to blight
Catalina's delight;
Until one luckless night

A visitor came—
Don Erauso his name—
Saint Sebastian! It was her papa!
At the door did she wait;
And she heard him relate
How his "Pussy" had crept through the nunnery bar;
And she heard something more,
While she stood at that door,
That the Don was the convent's protector,
And, with oceans of feeling,
Her sire was appealing
For help, on behalf of the Saint, to detect her.

The nun that night the Don's forsook,
And through the streets her way she took,
Till, entering at a stable door,
She found a lodging on the floor,
Upon a heap of straw:
And there two *muleteers* she saw;

And between their sleep she heard them tell
Of an expedition about to sail
To the World of the far West:
Over the sea,
There were lands for the free!
To them would she flee,
And find rest.

The wild rolling billow
Is Freedom's own pillow:
She boasts in the sweep
Of the wide-spreading deep:
Like the eagle that braves
The blue thunder-waves
Where the ocean of clouds rolls its surges along,
And foams round the clefts of the mountain's cold peak:
The cell's dead repose for the timid and weak!
But the war of the winds for the brave and the strong!

They engaged her as mate ;

Who would not take Kate ?

To the land or the sea an honour was she :

As the captain was destined in few days to see.

For when the ship drew

Near the coast of Peru

She heard the loud snort, in the tempest's wild breath,

Of the Pale Horse that speeds over turf and o'er surf

All silent and swift with his Rider, King Death.

The crew in affright,

Through the breakers white,

Rowed fast from the feet

Of the Charger fleet.

While Kate, true and brave,

The vessel to save,

By her captain stood fast on the mountainous wave,

On the Foe's foam-white face fixed a star's steady eye,

As a hero to live, or a hero to die.

The eye of Day
Opened cold and gray;
And the generous Sun
Seemed loth to look out on what Night had done:
For the sea, in her weeds and chambers deep,
Had shrouded the crew in their last long sleep;
And the ship lay all scattered and peeled on the waves,
Frail monuments strewn on the dead men's graves:
And nought could be seen
On the billows green,
But those wrecks of the Beauty which once had been.
And Kate stood alone
On that land unknown;
And she listened, and looked round the desolate shore;
But the sea-birds' scream, and the breaker's roar,
Were the only reply
From the earth or the sky,
To the maid who the sea had escaped, but to die.

For she stood by the mast till all hope was past,
And the vessel was breaking and sinking fast ;
Then, prudent as bold,
Going down to the hold,
She clave with a hatchet a box full of gold,
And loaded a raft with the pelf.
A second she loaded straightway with herself!
And called to her captain to follow.
He sprang from the deck
At her generous beck :
But, striking his head,
He went down like lead,
And the sea, with a gurgle hollow,
Over the place its waters spread,
And Kate was alone left to tell of the dead.

Cold and hungry, wet and weary,
In the ocean dark and dreary,
Tossed and whirled the maiden lay,
Choked and deafened by the spray ;

And her eyes straining over the sea grew dim,
And her blood wandered icy and slow through each limb,
And as daylight dies
In the western skies,
The senses stole
From her darkening soul,
And she lay on the sea as dead.
But when she awoke from her comfortless bed,
Re-warmed by the fire of the sunshine red,
She was safe on the strand
Of America's land,
And the gold-laden raft lying close to her hand.

Along the dreary, lengthening shore,
With dauntless heart the maiden bore;
Though she saw no face,
Nor footsteps' trace,
To guide her course, or to quicken her pace;

And she watched the sun sink thrice to his rest,
And the moon steal up from the ocean's breast;
And the white star-flocks around her drive,
And the sea come and go like a creature alive,
And amidst the dumb round of this all-living Whole,
She felt how alone in the world was a soul.

But when the third night
Drew its veil of white
Over the day's declining light,
The ghost of a town,
On the sea-shore brown,
Dawned dim on her sight;
And to substance grew,
As she nearer drew;
Till, resting her feet
In its friendly street,
She found to her joy that the vision was true.

And first the fair sailor
Must look for a tailor :
Do without him who can ?
Though he is but (you say) the "ninth part of a man."
But less than the ninth part
Were we who despise his effeminate art ;
If he chose to turn "tail"
On the dandies who rail,
And refused to take any more stitches !
O fear ye and humour a being so dread,
Who could send all the lords of creation to bed,
By leaving the world without breeches !

Now Catalina ill could spare
That common article of wear ;
For she belonged to the race (not rare)
The females of masculine gender.
O hadst thou lived in this age of nineteen
What a Girl of the Period hadst thou been,
Casting shame on every pretender !

For thou didst embody the character whole,
Not a man in array, and a chicken in soul,
But a hero as valiant as tender.
But sooth! if our clothes were our counterparts made,
How many a *man* must perforce be arrayed,
In the clothes of the opposite gender.

No figure or face
With such vigour or grace
Had ever, I ween,
In Paita* been seen!
What a pity that she should have wasted at sea
Gifts of mind and of body so high in degree!
This first did her *tailor* remark.
Then, offered a place,
With tailor-like grace,
Befitting the talent,
Of young man so gallant;
'Twas to be—let me whisper—*his clerk!*

* The name of the town to which she had wandered.

'Tis no blot on her name
That his clerk she became,
But rather a star in the crown of her fame.
For when a young man
Cannot be what he would,
He must be what he can:
And so he be good,
No matter what ill, Fortune bring on her wheel,
He still is a man, if he beg not nor steal.

Being called to Trujillo, the tailor committed
His power to the clerk—for command so well fitted—
Two laws making special, 'mong many:
"Let a certain young lady have credit unbounded;
But that young bore, her cousin—be all bores confounded!
Don't trust the gay dog with a penny."
But, alas, for poor Kate,
How cruel was Fate!

The youth was in love with the clerk's *situation*,
And the lady, in unconfessed Love's desolation,
Was pining in hope of a *nearer relation*.

By insults in public he vented his spleen:
By tokens in private her passion was seen:
Till at length came the hour of decision.
At the window one morning the clerk-maiden sat,
And the youth passing by, made grimaces and spat,
Kate could not brook such a derision.
With sword in her hand she rushed out to the street,
A few moments more—he lay dead at her feet.

That night the glooms of a prison cell
Around the ill-starred maiden fell;
And the dead man's friends
Clamoured loud for amends;
And, seeing no bribe,
The Judge—blessèd tribe
Were the Judges out there!

For never a prayer,
But only a fee could induce them to spare;—
The Judge with an equity almost divine,
Gave his prayers for her soul: and her neck to the lir

But Kate bribed the Jailer;
Blame the Jailer who can?
When the master takes fees, why should not the ma
To the young lady debtor,
He carried a letter,
In which she implored her fair friend not to fail her,
And she had already sent off for the tailor;
And by mighty strong pleas,
And all-mighty fees,
He succeeded in getting the door left undone:
And lo! when the jailer, as grave as a book,
In the morning went down for his prisoner to look,
The cage door was open, and bird there was none.

But blood that is shed,
On the murderer's head
Has branded its curse, in letters red:
And the sprite will not rest,
But wanders distressed,
Till its cries have been heard, and its wrongs been redressed;
And Nemesis came,
All robed in "a flame,"
That evening—'twas just before supper—
And thus, by the mouth of the *tailor*, she said,
"I command thee, young man, in the name of the dead,
That thou marry this maid ere thou goest to bed!"
O ye gods of the regions called "upper!"
What a fix to be in! though not for the sin;
But what they would deem worse, a thorough take-in.

What neighbourly things are the scaffold and altar!
The nuptial knot, and the noose of the halter!

The thought is enough to make any man falter :

And let him but add,

That for good, or for bad,

Their effects no man living can alter ;

'Tis sufficient, I say,

To make a man " drop," or run clean away

At the " ghostly " sight

Of the hangman in white,

Who comes with the Book, to tie him up tight.

In vain strove poor Kate

To escape from her fate,

Asking " how could a marriage a crime expiate ?"

For the tailor replied,

(Let his heart's blessèd singleness ne'er be denied ;

Nor his heart's single blessedness e'er be decried

For making his mistress another man's bride !)

" The crime was no more an affair of the State,

But a family squabble wherein law might not dabble

And sacred, of course, from the vulgar swine-rabble."

Delivered from prison, and caught in a trap,
This last was an equally fatal mishap.
'Twere a less crime indeed,
In their narrow creed,
For a young man to murder his brother,
Than for a young lady to marry another;
'Twere death to reveal—their revenge were so strong:
'Twas death to conceal—she could not for long!
But never failed Kate,
In her battle with Fate,
Her spring was a tiger's—she had but to wait.
In skill or in courage she knew not her mate.

Reminding her spouse of his late prison-woes,
The lady invited him soon to repose,
And the bridegroom, with bridegroom-like willingness, rose:
And then formed the bridal procession.
A woman-servant led the van,
And the tailor followed (Happy man!)

With a gait that adorned his profession.
Two wax-lights, flickering in his hand,
Emblazoned his joy at the prospering plan,
And chief and centre of the band,
The bride, with more than a tailor's grace,
Came beaming her joy in the bridegroom's face.

And the bridegroom's eyes were wildly bright,
Though kindling up, not with love, but for fight,
As a cat's might do when a-mousing at night.
At length Kate arrived within sight of the room,
She saw not a chance of escape from her doom,
Not a door to burst open, nor window to scale,
'Twas simply a matrimonial jail.
D' ye think she's going in there, Mr. Tailor,
Your rubbish to take, like a good little tool?
Oh no! Catalina is not such a fool!
Remember your clerk is a Sailor;
And old Mother Sea keeps a very good school.

The tailor went first with majestical tread,
And she saw, by the bob of his little black head,
That the room was approached by descent.
Nor failed she to see,
How from all fear of evil the tailor was free,
(As innocent minds are so well known to be,)
For the door he unlocked, and left in it the key!

Then down the steps the lady went,
And courteously her white hand lent,
To guide her bridegroom descending;
He, gracefully bending,
Threw his arm round her waist,
And threw her on the floor;
Turned the key in the door
And fled out in haste;

And the servant before, for she thought she was chased;
And the tailor and debtor, locked up in (a)maze,
Had the night to themselves, to consider their ways!

Again from her foes the maiden was free;
Though her prospect was dark, as prospect could be;
Like a tiger escaped in the wild woods to roam;
But lonelier far, for the woods are its home:
No home had she now, nor a shelter in flight,
Her only protection the shadow of night;
And the heavens shining o'er her, unfurrowed by care,
Seemed too pure, and too distant, her sorrow to share.
But she heard the loud call of the sea on the shore,
Familiar and sweet were its tones as of yore,
Her friend it had been—she would trust it once more.

The city lay still as an infant asleep;
No sound could she hear but that sob of the deep:
Nought moving could see, but that vast, heaving breast,
Like the heart of the world which is never at rest—
Like her own heart all throbbing and swelling with fears,
And glistening like ocean, her eyes full of tears;

Yet finding a solace sublime in its moan,
Its troubled existence, a type of her own.

Speeding fast to the harbour she unmoored a boat,
And hoisting a sail, she was quickly afloat,
Afloat on the wide, widening world of the seas,
Borne away, and away from the land by the breeze,
And glad as a hart that has found a retreat
In the forest's cool depths from the hounds' flying feet,
She gave her hot brow to the stars' cooling breath,
And her limbs were so weary—her sleep was like death;
And the night lay like lead on her sorrow-sealed eyes,
Till the Pilgrim of Day had pressed far up the skies.

Then she rose and looked round her—no land could she see,
But only the waste of the desolate sea;
Yet it seemed, when she thought of the foes of her race,
That the sea had a smile on its furrowed old face.
For the sea, *let it thunder* and rave all it can,

It hath not a breath of the malice of man.
Whether raging at tropic, or rigid at pole,
Nought knows the great deep of the hell in the soul-
The frenzy of passion, the silence of hate,
The spite of the mean, or the wrath of the great.
On the whirlwinds of human strife drifted and drive
Men hear in the tempest the music of heaven.

When the sun in the west hung large and dim,
A speck arose on the water's rim,
A shadowy thing, like an ocean sprite—
Its broad vans spread o'er the waters white.
But her eye was too steady and keen to fail,
She knew at a glance 'twas a vessel's sail ;
And high in the blaze of the sunset red,
A handkerchief white to the breeze she spread,
And at length they had caught her signal of woe ;
And she saw the vessel silently grow,
And its masts shoot up, and its sails wax wide,
Till it stood like a floating tower at her side.

By this time 'twas night:
And how gladly we wave a "good bye" to the light,
When we want any small matters put out of sight.
And Kate did the same:
For on her boat's stern
Was painted a name
Which she had no particular wish they should learn;
And knowing the dead
No rumours can spread,
She rocked the old boat till, too heavy to float,
It dozed away down to its watery bed.
Then springing away as it sank in the sea,
Kate ran up the ship like a "puss" up a tree.

The vessel with recruits was laden,
Enlisted for the wars of Spain;
And Kate reasoned, "Should a maiden,
Who has braved the stormy main,
Fear the storm of battle plain?"

She enlisted at once—to make short of the story,
And straightway 'gan looking for land—and for glory!

The one having reached, she soon sighted the other,
For the very first person she saw was her *brother;*
A splendid fellow was he—
An officer of cavalry—
And, what to Kate was more than degree,
A youth of princely courtesy;
For, when inspecting the vessel's roll,
He found a recruit from old Biscäy.
High swelled the pride of his manly soul,
And going at once for the stranger in quest,
His poor fellow-countryman's hands he pressed,
And gave him a welcome as only he can,
Who is not a fool of a fop; but a man.

And how high had risen the joy in his breast,
Had he known 'twas his sister's hands he pressed!
But alas! that joy was he never to know,

But a moment of bitter and fatal woe,
Which he never had known had his gladsome eyes
Ne'er glanced on that dearly-loved form in disguise.
But God has in tenderness veiled from our gaze,
The evils to come that would darken our days,
For no cheer would there be in our life's morning sun;
Did we know what would cross ere its journey were done.

And straight the old country rose up to his view,
And he thought of the anguish that choked his adieu:
Of the faltering voice of the father that blessed,
Of the shuddering clasp to his mother's fond breast,
Of the dear little sister that smiled in her sleep,
Too young at the kiss of his parting to weep:
Could she tell Don Erauso aught new about home?
(Word never forgotten, wherever we roam.)
"Did she know Don Erauso?"
"Oh yes, she should think so!"

"And the lady his mother?"

"Of course, she knew her just as well as the other!"

"And the little 'puss,' Kate, could she ever have met her?"

"Oh yes, she knew Kate even better!"

O Pussy! why don't you break down, and confessed
A maid and a sister, clasp him to your breast,
Whom the great God of all made your brother?
You would if you dare:
But alas! there 's another,
Who, even out there,
Has dungeons and chains, and an eye everywhere,
And the heart of a demon that knows not to spare:
A poor lonely maiden, her sisterly feeling
Must hide from her own—death the price of revealing.*
Be damned the Religion whose ban is so awful!
What God has made good Devil-Pope makes unlawful.

* The worst tortures of the Inquisition were reserved for a fugitive nun.

Who, dwelling alone in a foreign land,
Does not thrill at the clasp of a brother's hand,
As at touch of his native air?
And hear in his voice, and see in his eye,
The homely blue of his own dear sky,
And its music rich and rare?
And softly and sweetly the village chimes
Come floating across the sea;
And he lives yet again in those dear old times,
Of his childhood fresh and free;
And he still seems to sing the innocent rhymes,
Which he learn on his mother's knee.
Thus, felt Don Erauso, while Kate, the Magician,
Raised father and home—and herself in addition,
And set off the latter with fond repetition.

Enchanted to hear,
A story so dear,
He gave her a home, and enough of good cheer;
And in his own regiment, himself to be near,

He placed her with views of promotion.
O, Father Erauso! across the wild water,
Could your dim, straining eyes but catch sight of your
daughter,
Methinks you'd retract your ungallant old notion,
"The hope and the pride of a house are its sons;
And the girls, poor weak things, only fit to be nuns!"

For yonder, oh yonder!
Look, look ye! and ponder!
What is it that strikes on my vision from far?
What is it I hear,
Breaking loud on my ear?
Oh heavens! 'tis the flame and the thunder of war!
See, see how it flashes!
Hark, hark how it clashes!
That blood-billowed storm, like the sea o'er the bar.
And list to the whoop,
Of the Indian troop!
For the armies of Spain

Have been marshalled in vain;
The standard is lost, and the bearer is slain.

But who is it there,
That goes sweeping past,
As light as the air,
And bold as a thunder-cloud charging the blast?
'Tis she! 'tis the nun!!
She has charged! she has won!!
And see from the shrouds
Of the red battle clouds,
The banner comes dancing again in the sun!

And hither she comes! blare trumpets! roll drums!
Nay, hush! on her face see the blood flowing down;
And behold! all alone, all alone the maid comes.
Her comrades are gone,
Returneth not one,
Never more, never more shall they look on the sun:
Then alone did she fight for the King and the right!

Had set beneath the wave :
And dense and deep, the silent gloom,
Like a prophetic wing of doom,
Hung heavy as the grave.

And 'neath a monastery wall
That deepened the tenebrious pall,
They met in deadly fight :
Though each the other in the dark
Distinguished only by his mark—
An elbow band of white.
And round and round
They tread the ground,
And cross the gleaming steel,
Till both have found
A fatal wound,
And backwards fainting reel.

Then up the seconds start, and clash
Their swords to vengeance sworn,

Amidst the darkness bold and rash
With zeal to frenzy borne;
And round and round
They tread the ground
With fury more and more,
Till Kate has felt
Her sword to the hilt,
Grind through from shore to shore;
And hoarse in the gush of the gurgling tide,
As it spouts from its course through the red gap wide,
There struggles a cry which the death-gasp smothers,
"O villain, you've killed me!" Good God! 'tis her brother's!

Awakened by the din and shout
The monks with trembling haste rushed out;
And the glare of their torches red
Revealed a melancholy sight,
The traces of a bloody fight,
And three brave soldiers dead.

A fourth, bereft of reason lay,
The sole survivor of the fray;
And she, alas! at rising morn
Will wish she never had been born,
And curse the darkness that betrayed
So cruelly her luckless blade;
For sooner than in heart so dear
Into her own she 'd plunged it sheer,
(Of death the maiden had no fear)
All evils light beside the doom
To slay a brother in his bloom.

And who shall give the maiden rest,
While such a burden clogs her breast?
Where rolls the purifying flood
Can wash away those stains of blood?
The memory of that dreadful night
Will never cease to haunt her sight,
'Twill change to blood each silver moon
And crimson every golden noon;

'Twill bid the dimpled ocean scowl,
And make the fairest landscape foul;
'Twill wake in every threatening gale,
And linger in the forest's wail;—
That brother's blood-cry from the ground,
The whole creation shuddering round.
For when the conscience clouds the eyes
It spoils the most resplendent skies,
And makes the universe assume
The likeness of the Day of Doom.

The monks took up the senseless load,
And bore it to their safe abode,
For guilty hands, though wet with blood,
May grasp the altar of their God.
Nor vengeance may pursue them there—
The home of charity and prayer!
And where can conscience-stricken mind
A shelter so congenial find?
Where else repair to heal its smart?—

Sole haven of the broken heart!
Each stone and rafter in the place
Seems whispering benisons of grace;
Its silence falls upon the breast,
Like prophecies of heavenly rest;
And mortals feel their latest load,
Roll off beneath the touch of God.
Last refuge when from earth we're driven
The House of God and Gate of Heaven.

But vain to Kate was the House of Prayer,
For her heart was frozen with despair;
And in the chapel's ghostly gloom
There seemed to look out a face from the tomb;
And a plaintive voice, with a dying fall,
Came wailing along the silent wall;
By day and by night it smote on her ear—
That cry of the dead who was sleeping near;
And the saints from the aisles looked coldly down,
And even the Virgin's face seemed to frown;

And the Crucifix, spreading its arms to the race,
Had no pity for her in its agonized face.

And oft as she heard the chapel bell
Calling the monks from their quiet cell,
To the chants and prayers which she knew so well;
Her fancy, turning the past to gold,
Brought back in bright vision the days of old,
When she was a lamb in the Christian fold;
And she wished in her weakness—a wish how vain!
That she might return to a child again.

But longer here the maid must not dwell,
But, bidding the monks a long farewell,
Must go forth friendless and alone,
To wander wide in ways unknown;
And soon the parting words were said,
And through the aisles her way they led,
With solemn steps and drooping head.
Then, they remembered *Him* who said—

"Give to the poor, and follow Me!"
So gave they of their charity,
A horse for her journey, and food for the road,
And commended her life to the mercy of God.

And soon the sad walls have grown grey on her sight,
And she pauses a moment—as pause she well might;
For her heart is all faint with the burden it bears,
And whither she wanders she knows not nor cares;
For, alas! hapless maiden, wherever she roam
The world will no more wear the aspect of home,
For her heart's with the brother she slew in his pride,
Ah, would she were sleeping in peace by his side!
For never will peace find a place in her breast,
Till her poor stricken heart is with his laid at rest.

And there as she paused, the loud call of the sea,
Seemed to say, "Helpless, guilty one, come back to me."
It had not the musical welcome of yore,
But the voices of Judgment seemed mixed with its roar;

Perhaps, the Avenger was riding its wave,
And the angels of Death were preparing her grave;
And what seemed to her but the ocean's great boom,
Might be the loud wail of the trumpet of doom.
But she heard not the summons with grief or alarm,
To hearts that are broken e'en death has a charm;
And almost she chided the sea in her heart,
Which had spared her to act such a sorrowful part.

Three days along the lonely main
She strayed, and sought a boat in vain:
And then her horse grew faint and weak,
And away from the coast she turned to seek
A place where the beast might rest and eat;
And soon she espied a cool retreat,
Where the boughs on high,
Shutting out the sky;
And the boughs beneath
In verdant leaf,
Provided at once both repose and relief.

But hark!
From the thicket dense and dark,
A soldier's challenge: "Who goes there?"
It has broken the spell of her mute despair.
"Spain!" she replies;
And she feels in the answer her old courage rise,
And the fire of the hero illumines her eyes;
"What people?" "A friend!"
"All's well!" and they meet,
And each other they greet,
And the wandering maid sees her loneliness end.

Two comrades in arms, and deserters they were,
And flying the vengeance of Justice like her;
But want and woe had left deep traces,
In their pale and haggard faces,
And ere many an hour had run,
Earth would see their journey done,
Fallen in that final war

Which ne'er knew a conqueror,
(Saving that MAN who was —— more;)
They saw her face as an angel of God,
For she gave them wine and gave them food,
And poured fresh manhood through their blood:
Resolved with them her lot to share,
Though perishing together there,
And almost did forget her grief,
In minist'ring to their relief.

They had heard of a river whose waters rolled
Over beds of jewels and sands of gold;
They had but that beautiful river to gain,
And they ne'er would be hungry or footsore again;
But the great monarch mountains their pathway had barred,
And Winter stood there with his legions on guard;
And over the ramparts of ice and of snow,
They must climb ere they sighted the river below;

But Hope, like a desert mirage, danced before,
And already they saw themselves walking the shore;
And, as sands by the sea, they were heaping up gold,
And counting like pebbles their jewels untold.
And they looked on the mountains piled far in the sky,
And dared the hoar King on his throne to defy!

Always ready for danger—a child of the storm—
Kate gazed on the snow—and her bosom grew warm:
She would join her new comrades the mountains to climb,
And her heart it grew light in the prospect sublime;
For a moment she seemed to forget the dark past:
Like the storm-bird that mounts on the wing of the blast
Her spirit waxed strong in its own native air:
And the sight of new perils cast out her despair:
And blame not the maid if the thought of the slain
Forbore to pursue her with grief that was vain!

For the solemn old hills to the spirit's brave eye,
Are the spires of the world that point up to the sky!
Great pillars cast out in Eternity's mould,
While men spend their years like a tale that is told,
And their joys, and their griefs, alike baseless and fleet,
Are but mists that kneel down at Eternity's feet,
Just kiss the great mountain, with reverence due,
Then leave it alone in its Palace of Blue.

They gathered wild berries and roots at the base,
Then began the ascent with a firm, steady pace;
Through gleam and through shade, up hill and down dell,
They merrily went, as the ground rose and fell,
Till they stood on the mountain's broad patriarch-knees,
And felt its hale breath coming down in the breeze;
They passed through the forests that girdled its waist,
And toiled up the rocks that its sinews had braced;

They saw where the eagle had gathered her brood;
And the ages of wrecks which the tempests had strewed;
They felt the keen edge of King Winter's first breath,
And saw his snow clouds—those white banners of death;
They passed by the peaks where the storm-chariots rest,
And reached the fair snows of the mountain's pure breast;
But their feet did no sooner its white bosom scar,
Than the jealous old Elements rose up for war,
And the Winds smote their hands in the pride of their wrath,
And the Thunder flung down his dark robe in their path;
And the Frost drew his pale gleaming sword in the moon,
And waved it with scorn in the face of the Noon:

And they shuddered and quailed at the sound of the blast,
Like the wings of the angels of death sweeping past.

O ye mighty old Andes, whose foreheads sublime
Caught the sun's virgin kiss in the morning of Time!
Ye hoary old giants who dandle the storms,
While lightnings like lambkins frisk round your dread forms,
Who smile at the bolts from your pinnacles hurled,
And look from your thrones on the wrecks of the world!
For once bid the Frost-King retreat to his cave,
And shed a kind smile on the hearts of the brave;
For once with the summer's soft balm in your breath,
Bid back the pale hosts of the army of Death!
But vain the appeal! for the hand of the foe
Has already laid one on his death-bed of snow;
And the other, all powerless to fight or to fly,
Mid the deserts of winter is drooping to die.

'Twas a desolate scene, such as they only know,
Who have climbed to the realms of perpetual snow:
Around stood the hills looking grim in their sight,
Like an army of ghosts in their garments of white:
No voice cheered the air: nor the wing of a bird,
Nor foot of a beast the white wilderness stirred;
Nor the gurgle of rill, nor the murmur of trees,
Gave life to the hollow death-wail of the breeze.
The scene was so lonely, the silence so dread,
One might think he had entered the 'bodes of the dead.
But, see! what is that on the ledge of yon rock?
'Tis a man! 'Tis a man!! And Kate starts in the shock
Of her sudden delight,
At the unlooked-for sight.
"Rise, rise! comrades, rise!!"
Exulting she cries,
"On the ledge of a rock
A man I have seen!" and the shock
Of the joyful surprise
Wakes *them* from the sleep that is closing their eyes.

By his side, blissful vision! a gun she descried.
A sportsman! Ah, Winter, vaunt not in thy pride!
A few moments more, and our wants are supplied,
And Thou and thy frosts cruel tyrant defied!

Far ebbed was the life of the man who first fell,
But the joyful news like a sudden spell,
Held his spirit from flight;
And his comrade, less feeble, at once sprang upright,
And aided his brother to rise.
Then hand in hand, a weary band,
They moved along the rocks below,
With footsteps tottering and slow,
That made no sound in the deep, deep snow.
And still the man his station kept,
While on with noiseless feet they crept;
Then Catalina hailed him!
But his eye was so fixed on something below,
That his hearing seemed to have failed him.

Then up the rock behind him creeping,
His shoulder she touched, and asked "Are you
sleeping?"
And over he fell, and down he rolled,
And rang like a bell, and the frosty mould
Was blue on his face, and a ghastly grimace
O'er his Features were spread—for the sportsman was
dead!
A keener Marksman had bent his bow,
And fixed him up there in the frost and snow.

Like a thunderbolt the dreadful shock
Struck the heart of the feeblest, and down on the rock
He fell in a swoon, and spake no more.
But the stronger rallied
His courage, and sallied
Forth from the scene with fear-quickened flight.
Vain haste! for not far had he journey'd, before
The frost-sleep began to glaze over his sight;

And his blood trickled slow, and his courage sank low,
And he sat down to rest on the carpet of snow.
To rouse him Kate strove;
She begged him to move;
"Nay, just a brief while,"
He said with grim smile,
"Let me rest, and then on with new strength will I go!"
And he slept. And his journey was ended below;
And another lay bleaching and stiff in the snow.

And now, all alone,
In those regions unknown,
Stands the poor helpless maid,
For the first time dismayed.
At her feet lay the dead,
And the sky overhead
Resplendently cold, made the silence more dread.
But God was in Heaven she knew, she felt:
And down by the peaceful sleeper she knelt;
And she cried, and she prayed:

She confessed what a wandering child she had been,
She asked that her blood-bestained hands might be clean;
That her Father who thinks of the ravens so wild,
Would look down in love on his desolate child.
Did the angels descend while she bowed there in prayer?
She heard not their wings, and she saw nothing there.
The sky was as mute, and the silence as deep,
And the face of the dead had not stirred in its sleep,
But her way seemed less lonely, and lighter her care,
And something within her breathed, "Do not despair."

And now she has started again on the race:
And a gleam of new hope lightens up her pale face,
And upward she toils with a step free and light;
And peak after peak she sees rise on her sight;
And hours pass away, and lo! still she doth climb,
And taketh no note of the progress of Time:

But the bravest of hearts, alas! are but of clay,
And the sight of the widening and lengthening way,
At last her bold spirit begins to appal,
And the fears gather o'er that foreshadow a fall,
And her feet often plead in their weariness sore,
"Oh, sit down and rest, we can travel no more!"
And often she feels, taking shape in her breath,
The cry of the helpless that calleth for death.
And the world's pleasant visions rise up in her view,
And her heart in sad silence is saying "Adieu!
Fair landscapes, my rovings among you are o'er!
To me summer comes in her beauty no more:
No, never *will* come with her fragrance and bloom,
Not even to scatter a flower on my tomb;
But around me the tempests like demons will rave,
And Winter for ever sit throned on my grave:
Pass away, thou fair world, and no more mock my view!
Ye scenes of my childhood, for ever adieu!"

But see in her eye a light suddenly born!
(For darkest the hour is that travails with morn)
A question comes flashing, like light through the sky,
"Can it be the descent is begun? for the ground
Appears to slope down!" Then, turning sharp round,
"Yes, there is the rock beside which the dead lie,
Standing out sharp and rugged against the white sky;
Then the mountain is crossed!" she cries, rapturous sight!
The thrill almost shatters her heart with delight,
As shivers a glass in the hand of the frost,
When suddenly filled with a liquid in boil;
So mighty the shock of the blissful recoil,
Her strength in the flush of her joy is nigh lost,
And the delicate vase of her being, ice-bound,
Shakes, and threatens to spill out her life on the ground.

But soon victorious o'er its joy, her soul
Resumes the sceptre of its self-control,

And with steady step and eye serene
She wends her way through the wintry scene.
But lo! a mighty wall of rocks,
Bars up her path with its massy blocks!
Yet behold, a narrow pass between!
To it she flies; and bursts on her eyes
The beautiful skirts of summer green!
"Hail, Summer! sweet Summer in mercy divine,
Bursting bright on these poor weary eyes of mine!
My heart it thought never to see thee again,
And thy face only filled me with exquisite pain,
As I mused on the past, and sighed for thee in vain.
But now to old Winter a happy farewell,
In his palace of snow 'mong the stars let him dwell;
I envy him not in his majesty lone:
Give me the world's footstool, let *him* keep its *throne!*"

"Ye bowers of fair trees,
Caressed by the breeze,
O, give me a shelter! to you do I fly!

As the dove to her hold,

As the lamb to the fold,

So haste I to you! O, help, or I die!

I am weary and worn!

I am friendless and lorn!

And fain from the thoughts of the past would I hie.

O, give me a rest,

In your summer-warm breast,

And kiss me to sleep, ye soft gales, or I die!"

And down the rocky glen she flies,

Her strength is almost failing;

Unless Heaven help, the maiden dies,

E'en though the shelter hailing.

For famine, and fatigue, and cold,

Have sorely on her vigour told;

Nor longer can she keep her hold

Upon dear life,

Against the strife

Of foes so desperate and bold;

For, as a thousand dangers past,
Of rolling wave and straining blast,
The mariner may sink at last,
In sight of home and harbour;
So she, though past the precipice,
The rock, the cave, the deep abyss,
And all the snowy wilderness,
May never reach the arbor—
The branching bower that yonder stands,
And seems to beckon with its hands.

It was a bower by Nature formed
To cheer the traveller be-stormed;
Whether he fled from sun or rain,
Secure was he who it might gain;
The intertwining branches spread
An ample roof above his head;
Nor blast might smite, nor dews descend,
On whom those branches did defend.
And the unbroken silence round,

Seemed to proclaim it holy ground;
One might believe when Nature piled
Those snowy summits vast and wild,
She straight bethought her of her child:
Then, half repenting of the deed,
She made provision for his need,
And raised this generous bower here,
A little ark of refuge near.

And thanks to heaven! the maiden's feet
Have entered this divine retreat:
Although, poor heart! the refuge won,
Her last remaining strength is done.
She falls. Nor can she turn or rise.
But her face is up, and her gaze on the skies.
And through the leaves above her head
She sees the clouds of glowing red—
Those embers of the dying day—
And her fancy wandering away

On the wing of the light,

Takes far its flight,

And fondly it hovers round old Biscäy.

And there are the nuns at their vesper hymn,

And the tapers burning tenderly dim:

And hark to the Angelus'* peaceful sound,

Floating out on the sea and the mountains round!

And borne on her childhood's silver chimes,

She lives yet again in those dear old times,

And the world grows to *her* e'en the thing that it seems

And floats her away on its ocean of dreams.

And will she return from that magical deep?

Or, piloted by the pale Spirit of sleep,

Is her bark floating on, without motion or sound,

To the ocean, where all mortal vessels lie bound?—

A shadowy fleet in the ice-chains of death,

All silently waiting the earth's summer breath,

* She said, "It is evening, and the Angelus is sounding in Saint Sebastian."

When their numberless sails shall once more be
unfurled,
And the Host of Departed shall whiten the world—
For, how often the spirit by weariness prest
Is borne in its slumber to Nature's last rest!
And he who lies down in his weakness and sorrow,
Steals away to the darkness that knows not a morrow.

Twelve hours have fled and she slumbers still!
But now the ground
Throbs with a heavy measured sound—
She knows it well,
And it breaks the spell,—
'Tis the tramp of horsemen ascending the hill:
But again the magician waves his wand,
And again she sinks in the witching bond;
And the vapours of sleep,
Her waking thoughts steep;
As when a mist lifts from the face of the deep,
In the sun's sultry gleam,

But falls back on the stream,
With a darkness more dense;
So, as from a dream,
Her weary heart sinks in a sleep more intense.

And now they draw nigh,
And hark to their cry!
"'Twas this way it went!"
And their course is now bent,
Near where the maid lies.
Bold huntsmen they be,
'Mong the hills ranging free,
And their keen-sighted eyes
Soon catch the gleam,
In the sunny beam,
Of a clasp on her dress,
Then towards it they press;
How great their surprise
When reaching the place
Where the figure is lying,

To look on the face
Of an officer dying!

No further they ride,
But leap from their steeds;
And the chase and its pride
Are forgot, while they kneel at the sufferer's side,
In the luxury sweet of supplying her needs;
Her head finds a rest
On the forester's breast,
While the hand of another
With care of a mother,
The cordial applies;
Till her dim, frozen eyes
Have gleamed out the thanks which her tongue cannot speak,
And the warm hues of life have re-mounted her cheek.

And they ne'er felt their hearts with such manly pride *burning,*

When home from the chase those brave huntsmen returning,
Led in their proud steeds richly-laden,
As while on each side of the horse, with firm feet,
Their strong hands supporting their charge in her seat,
They bring home the poor rescued maiden;
And ne'er had their mistress bestowed on a guest
A welcome more glad than the shelter and rest
Which she gave to the stranger so young and distressed.

Oh, brave is the cheer
Of the gay mountaineer!
And his generous fare,
Like his hale mountain air,
Makes the blood bound along,
With a pulse firm and strong;
His hand hath the grasp,
Of the pine's mighty clasp,
And his heart ever flows
Like his own mountain snows,

With a fulness and freeness that change never knows!
No perishing form,
From his hearth bright and warm,
Was ever driven out to the wrath of the storm.
Let meanness and pride
In the city abide!
But charity blooms on the bleak mountain side!
Cold pomp hath its part,
In the temples of Art,
But the mountain's, the mountain's the home of the heart.

And soon in the cheer
Of this kind mountaineer,
All traces were lost
Of the famine and frost;
And fresh through her veins,
As the streams after rains,
The blood danced along,
To her heart's merry song;

And the hills in her sight,
Became things of delight,
Familiarly grand in their garments of light.

For so dear to our race
Is Nature's old face,
That her aspects most wild
Are forgot by her child,
Or remembered alone
As the pomps of her throne;
Her storm-passion o'er,
He sits at her feet,
In a confidence sweet,
And his love and delight are profound as before.

Nor only good cheer
Had this gay mountaineer;
But unlucky luck! a young daughter dear.
Her eyes like the sloes,
Her grace like the roe's,
And her bosom as pure as her own virgin snows;

Sweet Nature's own child,
The hills free and wild,
She had roamed like a fawn;
And drank from the dawn
A joy undefiled;
Nor fashion had garnished
Her youth for the tomb,
Nor passion had tarnished
Her innocent bloom;
Princess of the mountains
And born to their wealth,
She bathed in their fountains
Of beauty and health!

She knew the wild bird
That sang in her bowers,
And charmed with its music
The long summer-hours;
And the world's mighty features
Her eye loved to trace

In their thousand fine changes
On Nature's old face—
The sunlight and shade,
The hill and the glade,
The dark plumëd wood,
And the white-breasted flood,
The summer's warm cheek,
And the winter's eye bleak,
And the world's varied gear,
As it changed with the year—
But *man* seldom came,
Or the sound of his fame,
To this calm retreat;
And the thousand gay feet
Of Fashion and Fortune here never did meet;
But the mountains' white pinnacles lone and untrod,
Swelled up like the steps of the Temple of God.

But now what a sight met her innocent eyes!
Her simple young heart—it stood still with surprise

At the fine handsome face,
And the chivalrous grace,
Of the noble young stranger
Whom sorrow and danger,
Like angels disguised, had thus cast on their care.
And all unaware
There struck through her heart
That sweet venomed dart,
Which wounding and healing
With rapturous smart,
Melts all the young soul in an anguish of feeling.

And when he rehearsed all the deeds he had done,
The storms he had weathered, the fights he had won,
His tales of the field, and his tales of the flood,
His perils in waters, and perils in blood—
When, with all the pure pride of the hero, he told
How he dashed through the clouds where the blood-
thunder rolled

When the banner of Spain was borne off by the foe,
And shattered their triumph and pride with a blow,
Then brought back the standard all stained with his blood,
(There still on his brow the red battle-scar stood).
The eyes of the child
With astonishment wild—
As she sat by his side,
Lost in worship and pride—
Saw only his face,
With its glory and grace;
And the whole world beside
Was naught to the hope of becoming his bride.

And there she sat listening.
But Kate's eyes were glistening
With pitying tears,
To feel her young heart
Rising ever and sinking
With love's hopes and fears;—

Untutored by art
To dissemble her thinking,
Nor being through use
Or affection's abuse
Forearmed 'gainst the dart
That wounds the young heart—
By Kate's arm entwined
With feelings most kind—

I say she was sitting love-deaf, and love-blind,
For she *saw not and heard not her mother behind.*

"How dare you have placed
Your arm round her waist?"
She said to the cornet,
As wroth as a hornet.
"The love of a brother,"
Said he to the mother,
"I feel for your daughter."
But like milk was his face,
And his heart was like water!

Then the lady replied, with a dignified grace,

"You can't be her brother,

And if you don't mean to become, just—the other,

Get out of my sight!

And go, sir, to-night!

But if you will marry

Juana, then tarry;

My house and my land

Are at your command;

And nothing shall sever

Our three hearts for ever."

She stammered and stuttered;

She murmured and muttered;

At last plainly uttered

Confessions abundant,

Professions redundant

Of the great obligation 'neath which she was lying,

And the great hesitation she felt in complying;

"Who could have expected
An honour like this?
But instead, to have been in sore dudgeon rejected,
To so great a bliss
Had she dared to aspire! a soldier so poor,
Whom the servants had brought as a waif to the door."

"But I am rich, and can keep you both,
And seeing you love my dear daughter, your troth
Go and plight at the altar. Then nevermore roam,
Juana your bride, and my mansion your home!"
Now, what could she do after such kind advances,
But give her consent, and —— take all the chances?

But they who would marry
A short time must tarry;
For marriage requires preparations extensive;
We have reason to think, also, not inexpensive.
There's the wardrobe to furnish,
The Church to select,

The silver to burnish,

Bridesmaids to elect,

The friends to invite,

The house to get right,

And there *should* be a little time left to reflect.

And 'twas needful in this case

T' obtain a short grace,

On account of the rudeness and dearth of the place.

For the Andes could boast of a deal that was fine,

But satins and silks were not quite in their line.

Besides, the old ladies were very old fashioned,

Serious, sober, and staid—in fact, quite unimpassioned.

The bonnets they wore, they were made before Adam—

First Nature turned out, before she was Madame,

But only a 'prentice, though 'bout to set up;

(The shutters had just been ta'en down from the shop)

Plain things, as you'd judge, and all of one color,

Although just the style to agree with the dolor

Of those who would wear them; God bless their old
cheek!
When the young Sun first kissed them he found them
antique.
Life was new to him then, and he clasped the first form
That came in his way—but 'twas not very warm,
And the lusty young dog—he flew off to some other;
As a young man might do who, bent on a lark,
Deceived by the dark,
Instead of a lass had caught his grandmother;
Of course the old woman would own to a blush!
And so did the hills in their dignified hush.
And ever since then they have blushed in his sight;
For the gay roving Spark, with a teazing delight,
Keeps kissing and kissing the sober old creatures,
But never puts youth in their frost-bitten features.
And those old maids of Nature, in sober array,
Looking down from their seats on the things of a day
As they flirt with the Sun in their robes ever new,
Seem to say, with a pitying scorn, "It is true

All colours ye have, and four changes a year,
And we have but one, and our life is all drear;
But though dull in our dress, in our being sublime,
For we smile o'er your graves at the menace of Time."

To Tucuman they'll go
To buy the trousseau:
There also are weddings performed to perfection;
The ladies will give every needful direction,
And the cornet can give himself up to reflection;
Although his gay mind
Is not much inclined
To such sober diet
As study and quiet;
As quickly we find:
For when *they* go out rambling,
Our Kate goes out gambling.

Some men she had met,
Not the best in the earth;

But the best one could get
In Tucuman—their worth
You may know by one fact—they were all Portuguese,
And according to one of the proverbs of Spain,
"The good purple blood from a Spaniard's heart drain,
And the lees
Make a good Portuguese."

They played, and they played,
And a victim they made
Of the youth, who they fancied was green as a maid;
But Kate, though a maid, had learnt a few things
Since first she broke loose from the nuns' apron-strings.
She saw her coins dwindle,
She felt her wrath kindle,
And ere the last went she perceived 'twas a swindle.
The worst of the dozen
Should pay for the rest!
Not for naught should he cozen
A soldier distressed!

In the joy of his gain
He went whistling along,
And Kate in his train!
He won't whistle long
With "Pussy" behind!
You thief of a mouse,
You thought the "Cat" blind,
Because so securely you plundered the house!
But 'tis you that eyes lack,
Can't you see her? Oh, no! Well, she's just at your back!
He stops at his door, and he puts in his key:
Her paw's on his shoulder! Now, mouse, can you see?
Yes, and hear too! She says, "a robber are you!"
He turns and replies, "Perhaps that is true,
But I will not be told so, young fellow, by you!"
Confirming his word
By drawing his sword;
"Oh, that's your resolve! 'twasn't mine, as Heaven knows;
But since you prefer it, well then, sir, here goes!"

And right through his heart goes her sword in a trice.
You nibbling old sneak, you might win with the dice,
But let "Pussy" show fight, and then woe to the mice!

She looked down the street,
No face met her sight,
Nor echo of feet
Broke the stillness of night.
Then the corpse did she bear
Through the door open wide,
To the foot of the stair;
She laid it down there,
The key by its side;
Then hastening away
To her home and her bed,
Ceased to think of the dead
Till the breaking of day:—

No longer: for when the day came she was wanted,
ed by footsteps of men in her room;

Yes, there they were, five!—like five spirits of doom,
But a little more awkward—and Kate, never daunted,
Dressed herself at their bidding, and in her best manner,
As if for her wedding with little Juana!—
Juana, poor girl! she was crying heart-broken
About her poor Peter*, and as he came down
(*Her* Peter no longer, but hooked by the Crown)
She opened the door, and she fain would have spoken:
Spoken, say I? nay, given him a far sweeter token:
But what mortal living could do aught amiss
Before the *pure* eyes of the awful police?

Then came on the trial, though charge there was none,
Nor a proof of her guilt, nor of witnesses one,
But only a very ill-grounded suspicion:
And should it prove false after Kate had been hung,
'Twould but give the old big-wigs a sweet repetition,
And Reverend Jack Hangman "Cat" two to be swung.

* Kate now went by the name of Senor Pietro Diaz.

But Kate had given answers so clear and so fitting,
Her judges had almost resolved on acquitting :
But now there came two
As like to each other as shoe is to shoe !
By which I mean, Reader, they both dealt in blacking !
Though not in the modern ; but that which was latent
Before His Black Highness had granted our Patent ;
In this sort of goods the world ne'er has been lacking
Since He with the Brush that gives polish to evil
Bedaubed the Almighty with dirt of the devil.
According to Milton, the " Pair " daubed each other
As soon as the Serpent had shewn them the way,
Whether that be the truth or not, sure, I can't say ;
But I think their dear bairns love to black one another.
These two men, to wit—how black their tale shone !
Quite lustrous Kate's guilt—when their blacking
was on !

Said one, " It is known well throughout all my
quarter

This youth was in league with the murdered man's wife."
Here then was a case as transparent as water,
The husband had caught him, and lost his own life.
And the pris'ner his pass-key had dropped in the strife.
Then up sprang the other,
The words of his brother
To prove—and to add just a few of his own.
"He was standing that night at the corner alone,
And, hearing a window thrown up, looked about,
When he saw from that house the Alférez jump out."
Was not that a clear case?
Time, manner, and place
All given correctly—no hitch anywhere!
E'en the *motive* not lacking!
(How useful is blacking!)
"Eight days to prepare,
Then Kate, be you hanged by the neck in the Square."

Seven days were passed, and as evening fell,
Four reverend men slowly entered her cell,

Their serious mien and their sober array
Betokened their office to teach and to pray,
To hear the last sigh of the penitent's breath,
And brace up his heart for the conflict with death;
But in their chief's eye Kate discovered a sign
That sparkled too much to be solely divine;
Then grasping his hand in an agonized manner,
She found in the palm a small slip from Juana!
And whilst the instructions and prayers were proceeding,
She managed to give the brief billet a reading,
"Do not confess.—J." were all its contents:
But sufficient to indicate passing events.
So Kate straight refused to make any "confession,"
Declaring herself of no settled profession;
Whether Catholic or otherwise, could she not say!
She had not had time to religion to pay
Any special attention: the barracks and camp
Were not the best place, she had found, for the lamp.
The advisers went back to report on the case,

And the Judge, generous man, gave another day's grace,—
Of his Christian charity anxious to save
A poor condemned man from an infidel's grave.

Another day passed,
The prisoner's last;
Again the priests strove
The prisoner to move;
But their prayers and their "calls"
Seemed as likely to shake
The stout prison walls,
As her firm resolve, "no confession to make;"
Indeed, the old cell
Did shake, I believe, with the bursts of their zeal!
But on her their words fell
Like the sparks on the road that fly off from a wheel;
Then the Judge signed the warrant, and straightway the room,
Was filled with the dismal attendants of doom.

As the great weary sun was descending the sky,
The gloomy procession filed solemnly by,
Through the streets moving slowly along to the Square,
Where the scaffold stood gaunt in the meek, pallid air.

Every eye in Tucuman was waiting that night
With painful suspense for the sorrowful sight.
A dark, tearful ocean of faces below,
And the roofs all concealed 'neath their dolorous show;
Men's hearts, they were frozen, and fettered their breath,
And the city was still as a city of death,
While, slowly and steadily climbing the stair,
She appeared on the drop in the motionless air:
Now the moment is come to adjust the dread knot,
And the hands of the hangman are seen at her throat;
But he bungles so sadly and takes such a time,
That she takes the noose *from* the official sublime,

And tells him "that she
Knows better than he
How a knot should be tied—
She learnt it at sea."
And, calm in her pride,
She stood there and tied
Herself up like a man,—
As she did when she lashed herself firm to the raft:
The hangman! he stands looking on at her side,
Let him do it as well if he can,
"Mr. Hangman!" she says, "you disgrace, sir, your craft!"

Then, from window and street,
The great sea thunders out
So mighty a shout
Of praise to the culprit and scorn to the lout,
That he scarcely knows what on the earth he's about.
"Now, hangman, don't stick!
Come, brush up! be quick!

Or perhaps she'll be rescued,

And your little head

Will hang there instead;

Don't you see with what feelings the crowd is imbued?

I declare now they're coming!

See, see how they're running!"

"Room, room for the horseman! a horseman! room! room!!"

"Pray what is the matter?

Hark, hark to the clatter!"

"Room, room for the horseman! a horseman! room! room!!"

"Stay, the doom! Stay the doom!!"

He cries out aloud,

Dashing on through the crowd;

While the foam from the bit

Falls like snow on the street.

He forces his way

To the scaffold. Hurrah!

'Tis the President's respite!
The witnesses twain
With their story so plain,
In all things were lacking
Except in the blacking!
And, locked up in jail,
They have owned that their tale
Was a lie, pre-arranged 'tween each other;
And they who have traced them,
And found them, and faced them,
And in the jail placed them
Are little Juana, dear girl! and her mother!
And 'twas this the pet meant in that little address
Which she sent by the priest, saying, "Do not confess."

To La Plata transmitted,
And duly acquitted,
Poor Peter was free to go whither he would.
And the President, guided
By prudence, decided

'Twere best that he tarried
A while ere he married.
(Kate heard the advice, and *she* saw it was good.)
And, for his health's sake,
He counselled him further,
A journey to take.
For after a murder,
(Though only reputed,)
A little fresh air
Is a boon undisputed.
Nor seemed it but fair
In the President's sight,
That she who his innocence brought to the light,
And was out of her senses
Almost, with delight,
To prove she was quite,
Should pay his expenses.

The expenses were paid as a matter of course;
And Kate, on the back of a "bonny black horse,"

Went speeding away, free and light as the wind,
And leaving her sweetheart and troubles behind;
To Paz she went first; and she rode with such grace
That all eyes were turned as she passed through the place,
Charmed alike by her chivalrous bearing and speed,
Gazing now at the rider, and now at the steed;
But Kate was too proud, and too humble to care
For men who had nothing to do but to stare;
And onward she rode, in the dignified ease
That designs no offence, but is careless to please.

But when did a trav'ller, though never so civil,
Get far on his way without meeting the devil?
Two soldiers passed by—and their eyes waxed so bright,
That Lucifer must have just struck up a light.
But whistling away her suspicions of evil,
Still onward she rode: but the daring old devil
Is not to be whistled away, Oh no!

Although Doctor Luther once tried it, we know,
And he scampered to hell
With a horrible yell,
And left his damned job in the middle.
But his nerves had got used to all that long ago ;
Though I think he'd still give a small squeak at the fiddle !
But sooth, I'm all wrong ! for 'twas not a psalm tune
Catalina was whistling, but some lively rune
Which many good people would call the "Deil's own."
Though, for my part, I long have been fixed in the notion
That the devil has taken to psalms, and has grown—
His voice I mean has—quite attached to devotion ;
For instead of glad songs which the "blue devils" flee,
There's nought but what might with their stomachs agree,
Such mumbling and moaning and horrid intoning,
One would think all the devils were in the pews groaning.

So, daring the whistling, came riding up straight,
Not his Highness the Deil; no such honour for Kate!
But his worshipful servant, the *Judge of the place;
And seeing a very queer look in his face,
Kate pulled up undaunted,
And asked what he wanted.
"These men say this horse has been stolen," said he.
"I do not know how that can be," answered she,
"Since I bought it, and paid for it: but we shall see!"

By this time the horse-cloth was over its head;
"Now, if it was stol'n from these soldiers," she said,
"They know of which eye it is blind;
I'm aware that the scope is a little confined,
But all the less strain it will be on their mind."
"'Tis the left eye!" cried one; "No, no!" said the other,
"You forget, 'tis the right;" "Go on; have another!

* Called the Alcaldé.

"Guess again!" answered Kate, with a smile of
derision;
And bade the Judge notice this little division.
"But," said they, "we were hurried,
And men, when they're flurried
Are apt to forget."
"Right, they are so!" said Kate,
"We'll pass the confusion,
And hear your conclusion."
"Left eye!" said they both,
"Yes, left! lift the cloth!"
And she did so; with air never blither;
While softly she said, with a toss of her head,
"There's nothing the matter with either."

The Alcaldé, sore grieved,
His spirit relieved,
By asking the cornet to dinner;
"My judicial old eyes! who would have believed
They could ever have been so completely deceived

As to think that fine fellow a sinner?
Don Antonio, go!" to his cousin he spake,
"To the youth my respectful apologies make,
With this invitation to dine,
And should he decline
Let him know that the Judge no denial will take!"

Don Antonio went
His commands to fulfil;
Kate gave her consent
With a hearty good will;
Though saying the while
With a proud little smile,
"I, too, serve the King of the Indies and Spain:
'Twas my fortune the rank of Alférez to gain!
A native of Biscay, but now on my way
To Cuzco." "To Cuzco? and you from Biscäy?"
Don Antonio cried, "What pleasure is this!
My cousin's a Basque, and to-morrow he goes
To Cuzco, like you: may I therefore propose

That we travel together?" What unlooked for bliss!

Thought the poor weary girl, and she gladly complied;
With a Judge at her side
For once she felt sure of an undisturbed ride.

But no such good fortune, alas, was for Kate!
To fall in with a tempest was always her fate:
And at dinner she saw the first flash in the skies;
'Twas in the bright depths of Antonio's eyes,
And the eyes of the Judge's young wife.
Kate caught in a wink
The lightning's gay twink
That proclaims electricity rife.
Though *she* had no fear
That her atmosphere
Would share the electrical strife.
But when thunderstorms burst
We never know where they will strike, or where first!

The ruinous fire
On the temple's pure spire
May spout out its wrath,
And leave in its path
The den of the guilty unscathed by its ire.

At morning they set off for Cuzco together.
She noticed no change for the worse in the weather,
Though the journey all through, ill-dissembled and rash,
The eyes of those two exchanged flash after flash:
And marvelled she much that a Judge should not mark
What to her was so clear—she had seen it by dark:
But it was not for her to enlighten his mind;
If a man will not use his eyes let him be blind.

The roads being bad, very slow was their pace:
But at length, being only twelve leagues from the place,
Their journey was near its completion;
And, halting the night at a town on the road,

The Corrégidor furnished them each an abode,
And feasted them all to repletion.

The Alcaldé was lodged at the mansion official,
In manner becoming his office judicial:
While at the hotel, both the friend and relation
Found lodgings provided befitting their station.
And as for the lady—the best to the fair!
Nor blame the sweet rose for its love of fresh air!
A beautiful summer-house fell to her lot,
Enclosed in the peacefullest, loveliest plot,
Embosomed in flowers,
O'ershadowed by bowers,
Mid luscious perfume
Of tropical bloom:
There, through the cool hours,
The stars shining calm,
The night dropping balm,
All things breathing love
Round the beautiful dove,

She might lay her white breast
In her summer-still nest,
With Beauty sole guard of her innocent rest.

Here in the lady's lovely bowers
They whiled away the evening hours,
Nor parted till the stars were bright
In the clear blue summer night:
Then all the company arose
To leave the lady to repose.
The Alcaldé bade her a sweet good night,
And with the Corrégidor passed out of sight.

And Kate followed after. But having forgot
Her hat, she went back, and then the whole plot
She saw at a glance. In the vestibule stood,
Making whispers and signs that foreboded no good,
The bride, with the young cavalier.
Then one of the candles that stood burning near,
In her fingers she took, with significant look,

And snuffed it: a sign which he quite comprehended,
And so did our Kate—though for her not intended!

And Kate had seen signs in the Judge's old eyes
That his ignorance was but a "lawyer's" disguise.
And as the two youths walked along to the gate,
(The lady was with them, although it was late;
For being midsummer the air was so mild
It would not have injured the health of a child).
Two eyes like a beast's that lies watching for prey,
Kate saw glaring out of the shrubs by the way.
And a rustling was heard as if somebody stirred,
"What's that?" asked the lady. "Oh, only a bird!"
Said Antonio, heedlessly, and they passed on,
And the lady returned to her dove-cot alone.

But not long alone shall she wait in her bowers,
And she fancies these moments of solitude hours;
Sleep is far from her eyes; nor all Nature at rest
Has a charm that can soothe her love-agonized breast.

That anguish of longing seems stealing her breath ;
Her form is a statue's, and silent as death.
She fears e'en to move lest her ear should not greet
The stealthy approach of the thrice-welcome feet.
If the leaves do but rustle, her heart it beats quick,
Her white bosom swells, the blood flies from her cheek,
For she deems it the tidings her lover is near,
And she feels the brave arms of the gay cavalier
Already in fancy's sweet dream ; and his kiss
Drinking up her young soul in oblivion of bliss.

At last the appointed moment has come,
And Antonio silently steals from his room.
He softly descends. He has opened the door ;
He glides through the street—a few moments more !—
But who is this walking the street so late ?
He starts. He stands still. She approaches. 'Tis Kate.
Yes, 'tis Kate, Don Antonio ! clear to her mind
Is your plot ; and the danger to which you are blind.

She seeks to dissuade him with love's gentle force,
But as soon might she stop the great torrent's mad
course,
Or roll back the sea ere it comes to the flood,
As stay the swoll'n tide of his passion's hot blood;
He turned round, and straight disappeared in the gloom,
And sped to the scene of his pleasure—and doom.

Hark! was it the gentle wind fondling the leaves?
The lady's cheek pales, and her white bosom heaves.
No, 'twas he! he has passed through the garden gate.
Her bliss, how it ripens! not long shall it wait.
The candles are flinging their rays to the night—
Sweet symbols of welcome and love to his sight.
Behind the trees, watching their flickering beam
Antonio stands, in love's happiest dream.
And now, see her white, trembling finger uplift!
The light is extinguished! now up the steps swift!
One bound! he's within, and the arms of the fair
Have locked him in bliss that none other may share.

But, hark! what a dreadful confusion and roar!
And see the black heap that rolls out from the door!
Are they tigers that meet in that deadly embrace?
Those yells, do they issue from one of our race?
Or were there fiends lurking to-night in the place?
Nay, go nearer, and look on that blood-spattered face—
'Tis the gay cavalier's! Oh, horrible sight!
No eye can mistake that look ghastly and white!
He is lifeless: and over the motionless clay
Yells the frenzied Alcaldé like beast o'er its prey.

And see the white figure that stands on the stair,
All shivering with dread in the chill midnight air!
'Tis the lady; and lone in her horror and woe,
She reads her own doom in the struggle below.
But, thanks be to Heaven! a figure she sees,
Standing dim in the shadowy gloom of the trees.
And, speechless with terror, she flies down the path,
And begs a defence from her husband's mad wrath.

Nor in vain does she plead! 'twas the figure of Kate!
Her bosom will bleed ere it yields to its fate
The agonized heart of the lady so fair,
Who has trusted her life to her chivalrous care.

In her cloak did she muffle the shivering form,
And bore her away from the scene of the storm.
And beneath the dark shade of the high garden wall,
The shuddering burden she softly let fall.
Then she saw the Alcaldé all mad from the strife,
Through the garden gate rush in pursuit of his wife.
He looked this way, and that, but nought saw he or heard;
They nestled down close, and they spake not, nor stirred.
Then away to the house he directed his course:
And Kate seized the moment to fly for her horse.
The convent at Cuzco was ruled by a friend—
Once there, its stout walls would the helpless defend.
Kate saddled her steed, placed the lady behind,
And rode for the refuge with speed of the wind.

Five miles have they sped in their wild headlong
flight,
All safe through the dangers and darkness of night;
But now at their feet rolls a deep torrent wide!
And how shall they cross to the opposite side?
For the bridge is concealed from their wildered sight,
In the dusky veil of the moonless night.
"Oh heavens! go forward!" the lady cries,
With quivering voice and with starting eyes:
"Forwards!" says Kate, at the wail of distress,
And urges the steed with a fond caress;
And into the flood, with a generous bound,
He plunges, nor fears he the torrent's sound.
For he hears the voice of her gentle command,
And his proud heart swells at the touch of her hand;
And now he sinks deep in the heart of the flood,
And his riders have felt the chill strike through their
blood,
For the waters increasing as onward they go,
Rise around them till all save their heads is below;

But the brave struggling steed with his nostrils wide
spread,
Presses on though his hoofs cannot feel the deep bed,
Nor rests, till erecting his neck from the tide,
He snorts to the stars all his triumph and pride.

The lady is still in her evening attire,
And how welcome were now the bright blink of a fire!
And lo! as in mercy sent down from the sky,
A glimmering gleam from a window hard by!
Then towards it they haste through the night's chilly
gloom,
'Tis the light of a lamp in a cottager's room!
Kate knocks with a shivering hand at the door,
And meets the kind smile of the honest and poor.

A fire is soon kindled a meal to prepare;
The hearth, it is homely, nor less so the fare;
But the welcome is hearty, and grateful the guest
For the frugal supply, and the opportune rest;

But they soon must depart, nor in speed must be slack,
For the furious Alcaldé will be on their track,
So buying the lady a robe from the host,
Kate rode off redeeming the time she had lost.

Ere long broke the clattering sound on their ear,
Which proclaimed the Alcaldé rode hard in their rear.
Then onward dashed Kate, with a huge, mighty bound,
Her horse went so swiftly, he scarce touched the ground:
But still the pursuer rode close in her track,
And soon in the white of the dawn huge and black,
He loomed into sight riding fast and more fast;
And faster rode Kate, till fair Cuzco at last
She saw sleeping dim in the haze of the plain;
Now onward, brave Kate! give your charger the rein!
Three miles and the gates of the convent are won,
And not the least brave of your exploits is done!

Still faster she flies in her mad whirling course ;
And the foam hangs in wreaths on her ebon black horse,
But lo ! of a sudden resisting her flight
A deep and broad trench threatening yawns in her sight.
She must leap it or lose ! and wheeling sharp round
She retreats, then comes down with a rush and a bound :
She is over ! Bravo ! Now on, on again !
Brave charger ! Brave Rider ! On, on to the plain !

She is off again ! See how the hoofs spurn the ground !
Flash ! Bang ! and the bullets fly whistling around.
Bravo ! they have missed ! But what means that fierce bound,
And that speed like the lightning's ? The horse has a wound !
Thanks to heaven for that bullet ! no bit could restrain
His fiery blood now lashed to madness with pain.

He needs not the spur, his proud heart is on fire,—
The riders will win though the steed may expire.

The Alcaldé, with arms tossing high in the air,
Came on with the bold reckless haste of despair—
Riding down on the trench with a terrible sweep;
But his charger, less reckless, objected to leap,
But saw no objection to give him a lift;
So over his ears he dispatched him right swift,
And down in the sand he went, all of a heap:
The birds with a scream,
And the dust like a steam,
Rose up to the skies,
And a few grains were lodged in his nose and his eyes.

Kate shouted and knocked at the convent gate,
But the servants were sleeping; and long did she wait
Ere the door, slowly opening, received the fair load,
To the safety and peace of the hallowed abode.

Then having delivered the charge she came back;

And whom should she meet,

Face to face in the street,

But the charger, so trusty,

And rider, so dusty?

O Lord! Why she thought he had broken his neck

Look alive, Katie, dear!

He means mischief, the wretch!

Kate will, never fear!

When "Pussy" you catch

Asleep in her watch,

Or blind to a warning

(Remember the dice!)

The rats and the mice

May go out of mourning!

He speaks not a word;

But out flashes his sword

With a cold, cruel gleam

In the pale morning beam;

The revenge he has lost

Her blood it shall cost!

A moment—their swords in fierce combat are crossed.

She is weary and weak,

Pale and worn is her cheek;

And scarcely her hand

Can its weapon command;

But when did Kate yield,

Or in fight or in field?

And still she strives on,

Though her strength is nigh gone.

O God! he has wounded her! see on his steel

The dark purple stain! And soon shall he feel

That she bleeds not in vain; for the wound in her pride

Burns hotter than gash in her bosom or side;

Her flesh grows all spirit, her weakness is gone,

Her pity is dried, and of pain she feels none;

And the blast of revenge sweeps in gusts on her breath,

And plumed on her brow sits the Demon of Death.

But hark to the clatter of horses' feet!
The Judge's two servants! they fly up the street;
Dismounting in haste,
They unite in the fray!
And their blows let them waste,
If they will! for on Kate
They will fall as on Fate.
Beware of this tigress from ancient Biscäy!
Were ye devils she'd dare ye and keep ye at bay!

Her blade has flashed straight through the Alcaldé's side,
And there he has staggered, and fallen, and died.
But the Alguazils have now rushed to the spot
With the Alcaldé's servants to cast in their lot:
And their swords, they flash fast in the red morning sun,—
Clash, clash, clash, clash, clash,—a host against one.
But hark to the roll of those huge massy doors,
That from violence guard the Episcopal floors!

"In the name of the Virgin," the Bishop commands,
"I enjoin you, surrender your sword to my hands!"
"My Lord," says the cornet, "I dare not obey,
While so many enemies stand in my way!"
"But I become surety for you to the law!"
Whereupon she obeys with a filial awe;
And into the palace her wound to be dressed,
The Peacemaker leads her to safety and rest.
Now her wand'rings must end, and her secret be told—
The poor weary lamb has been caught in the fold.
The blood flowing fast shews the wound in her breast.
Alone with the Bishop—the whole is confessed!
All her roaming and fighting, her glory and pain;
And she faints—as she did 'neath the banner of Spain;
And the priests and nuns stand half-entranced, half-dismayed,
As they hear of the deeds of the wonderful Maid.

The Bishop transmitted the tale to Madrid,
Nor forgot to report to the King what she did;

When alone in the battle, her comrades all slain,
She wrenched from the foe the lost banner of Spain.
A story so wonderful could not be hid:
'Twas ere long the one theme of all tongues in Madrid,
And thence throughout Spain with electrical speed
Her name, it was spread and the fame of her deed,
Till from King and from Pope, from Madrid, and from
Rome,
Mid the shout of all Spain went the mandate, "Come
home!"

And she came at the voice of her country and King;
And she heard the bright shores of her native land ring
With the glad peals of bells and the loud roll of
drums,
And the shouts of the people, "The Heroine comes!"
For, thronging the streets of Cadiz far and near,
On turret and tower, on the ships and the pier,
Gay myriads stand watching the stroke of the oars
That bring the brave wanderer back to their shores:

And the rowers in liveries royal are drest,
And the people are clad in their gayest and best;
And banners are flying from steeple and spire—
Emblazonry proud of the nation's desire.
And he who receives her with honour so great
Is the first in the Court and the chief in the State.
And the palace, with rank and with beauty is bright;
And the eyes of the proudest weep tears of delight
While the King from his throne spreads his arms to his guest,
And folds, with a kiss, the brave girl to his breast.

And oft was she found in those palaces royal,
Rehearsing the tale of her glory and toil;
For the King loved to hear, yet again and again,
How she ransomed the banner and glory of Spain.
She travelled to Rome, by her Monarch's desire,
And her fame set the mighty old city on fire.
So great was the joy and so strong did it burn,
One might fancy a Cæsar had burst from his urn.

The Cardinals welcomed their penitent nun,
As the Monarch his faithful Alférez had done.
The flight, and the bloodshed of years were forgiven,
And her pardon pronounced by the Vicar of Heaven—
For the Pope took his daughter in peace to his breast,
And pointed her eyes to the world of the blest,
Where the brave and the beautiful cease from their toil,
And the conquerors share with The Mighty the spoil.
He bade her no more think of vengeance and blood,
But leave all her wrongs to the justice of God:
And shewed her the hands and the feet and the side
Of Him who for sufferers suffered and died.
And more than her deeds he delighted to hear
Her confession so sweetly and sadly sincere;
That she stood in his presence, for all the dark scene
Neither better nor worse than she ever had been.

The cynosure of Spain and Rome,
In court and camp alike at home:

Alike by rich and poor caressed—
By monarchs praised, by bishops blest,
Ten years of glory passed away:
Yet found she but a broken rest,
And like a sunny winter's day
Her glory was as cold as bright,
And sinking swiftly into night.
Oh, but for memory of one,
How glad had been the warrior-nun!
But midst the splendour, every thought
By him was shadowed who——was not:—
The beautiful, the brave, the blest:
Would she were in his grave at rest!

She thought upon his noble face,
And all his manliness and grace;
And how, with all a brother's pride,
He breathed her name who by his side
Unknown he cherished, and had died
Rather than she had suffered shame;

So good, so noble, and so true;
And it was him her weapon slew.
And mid the plaudits of her fame
A cry rang ever like a knell,
A voice she knew, alas, how well!
It seemed to fill the earth and sky—
Her brother's imprecating cry;
And yet its fascinating breath
Made her almost in love with death.

At length she joined a noble band,
Bound for that glorious, fatal land,
Which gave her all the love of Spain,
With grief that turned it all to pain.
Her spirit, generous and brave,
Felt the attraction of the grave,
And midst the sighing ocean gale
She seemed to hear a spirit's wail,
And her heart responded to the sea,
"*Brave*, noble spirit, I come to thee!"

The officers, on touching land,
Lowered a boat and went on shore:
And Kate went with them. Happy band!
They leaped, they jumped, they ran before,
With jest and prank, and merriest roar.
Then suddenly they missed the nun,
So proudly loved by every one!
"Where's our dear Kate?" with bated breath
They asked, their faces pale as death.
And among the woods and beneath the wave
They sought her. In vain! all was still as the grave.
Nor on sea nor on shore
Would they look on her more.

Brave Kate! gentle Kate! she was gone to her brother;
And ONE who was dearer than Father or Mother.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

WINNIE.

Oh, Winnie was the finest maid
That trod the village green,
And though in homely kirtle clad,
She donned it like a queen.

I see her coming down the lane
With head erect and high!
My blood ran up to boiling heat
While she went softly by.

There was a magic in her pride,
For ne'er a stain had she;
No high-born lady in the land
More justly proud might be.

Her cheeks were lovely as the dawn,
Her heart as fresh as they;
Serene and holy as the night,
But free and frank as day.

But years have passed since royally
That maiden trod the green—
A matron and a mother now,
But even more a queen.

Ruling the empire of a heart
She boasts to call her own,
I see her in the firelight's blaze
On her domestic throne.

Happy the maid whose virgin wreath
Retains its early green,
Until it blossoms in the crown
That decks the nobler queen!

SONG.

Oh, fierce the blasts blow, and fast falls the snow,
And the streets are deserted and dreary;
And how sweet 'tis to 'bide by my happy fireside,
In the bosom of love and my dearie.

Oh, life has its cares, and the world has its snares!
But let them assail till they're weary,
While with fondness caressed my spirit finds rest
In the bosom of love and my dearie.

Some fly to the bowl from their sorrow of soul,
Nor without its false fire can be cheery;
But what's all their wine to a moment divine
In the bosom of love and my dearie!

TO A LADY.

Age will furrow that fair brow;
Freeze those golden locks to snow.
Time, with tempests fierce and bleak,
Sweep the roses from that cheek.
Those blue orbs be dimmed with tears:
Bent that virgin form with years.
But this heart all time defies;
Love is young when nature dies.

THE MISTLETOE, O!

'Tis merry Christmas time;
Let the merry bells chime,
And together let us all be merry, O!
Come, dress up the room
With winter's red bloom,
And don't let's forget the mistletoe, O!

CHORUS.

The mistletoe, O!
The mistletoe, O!
O, don't let's forget the mistletoe, O!

O, come every miss
And take a merry kiss!
For kisses are sacred at Christmas, O!
Just once in a year
Ye may scorn every fear,
And make a bold dash 'neath the mistletoe, O!

CHORUS.—The mistletoe, O, &c.

'Tis the time for good will,
So let's take our fill
Of all that is good, with a strong will, O!
And nought can surpass,
In dish, cup, or glass,
A smacking good kiss 'neath the mistletoe, O!

CHORUS.—The mistletoe, O, &c.

Let us dance and let's sing,
And let each merry ring
Be a chain of enduring affection, O!

And as we whiz round
With a wildering bound
We can snatch a sly kiss 'neath the mistletoe, O!

CHORUS.—The mistletoe, O, &c.

And when upon our head
Life's winter drear has shed
The snow-flakes of many a Christmas, O!
We will think with delight
Of the old Christmas night
When our lips first took fire 'neath the mistletoe, O!

CHORUS.—The mistletoe, O, &c.

SONG.

Oh, when is my true love coming?
She said she'd come to-night;
And weary I am with watching
Beneath the cold moon-light.

The stars are shining o'er me,
Never are they untrue;
To their appointments faithful,
They meet in the fields of blue.

There in fair groups they wander,
While I wait here alone,
O love, the stars are faithful!
But thou hast a heart of stone.

The nightingale warbles near me,
And woos his gentle mate,
And his music but reminds me
My heart is desolate.

But hark! I hear a footstep:
And now I hear a song,
"I'm coming, love, I'm coming,
I grieve to have been so long:

But I lost my way as I came, love,
For my thoughts were fixed on thee;
Thy face so dazzled my fancy,
My path I did not see."

O, come to my heart, thou fair one,
And let our love be sweet:
And only the stars shall see, love,
The place where the lovers meet.

IT IS NOT ALWAYS WINTER, DEAR.

It is not always Winter, dear,
The skies will smile again,
And fairer will the broad fields be
For all the cold and rain.

The singing birds have hushed their note,
The trees are lone and bare,
The laughing streams are still and mute
And Death seems everywhere.

But Spring is sleeping in the woods
That look so dark and sere,
And soon she'll wake and clothe herself
In Nature's new-spun gear.

And o'er the hills her sunshod feet
Will trip with youthful glee,
And in her wake the flowers will start,
And birds sing merrily.

Then let us warm our hearts with hope,
When all without is drear;
For, oh! *life* is not always dark,
Not always Winter, dear.

SONG.

Oh, worth all the world is a winsome wife's smile!
Nor jewels nor gold can excel it:
My cottage it turns to a palace the while,
Nor for all the king's wealth would I sell it.

It gives her print gown a fine gloss and a style
That I see not in silks or in laces,
And it lights, oh, it does! a winsome wife's smile,
To an angel's the plainest of faces.

It shines on my board and it shines on my bed,
God's beautiful smile in reflection,
And wherever I go it encircles my head,
The flower of my manhood's perfection.

And proudly I'll own her, this good wife of mine,
The crown of my life and my pleasure;
While I boast of a joy which no king can divine,
Who counts not a wife his chief treasure.

SONG.

Oh, dark is the life that is clouded with strife !
Though Fortune with glory may gild it :
For there's that in the breast which can never find rest
Till Love's gentle finger has stilled it.

And golden-winged Love, coming down from above,
Walks nightly the sea of our sorrow :
And her voice small and still, of omnipotent will,
Speaks peace to the cares of the morrow.

And the cottager poor, met by her at his door,
When at eve he returns sad and weary,
Forgets the long road, while he throws down his load,
And flies to the arms of his dearie.

But a palace is cold, though it glitter with gold,
If Love reign not there in meek duty:
Nor an hour would I dwell in that home-painted hell,
For all the world's riches and beauty.

SONNET TO LOVE.

Oh, I have wooed thee, gentle spirit of Love,
And worshipped thee since first my waking soul
Saw thy wings brooding o'er this jarring Whole!
And thou hast drawn my thoughts these wrecks above:
And yet thou dwell'st not with me, Holy Dove!
My home is ashes; and my heart forlorn
Sighs for the peace 'neath thy sweet influence born:
And rest is none where'er I stay or rove.
And when I see thee with soft wings and white
Shadowing the chosen hearth with sober bliss,
And saying "Mid the Chaos here be Light."
I cry, though now the precious boon I miss,
Rise to thy native sphere before my sight,
And cheer me through the loveless glooms of this.

THE SHIP ON THE SEA.

Soft, soft are the moonbeams glancing
  Upon the summer sea:
And the waves like fireflies dancing,
  In gambols wild and free.

And lo, a ship like a phantom,
  Walking the deep in white,
Glides gently before my vision,
  And passes out of sight!

Like the life of man which cometh
  Out of the shadowy past:
And into the silent future,
  Speedeth its voyage fast.

A little while it appeareth,
  Passing Time's narrow shore:
Whence it came, or whither goeth,
  No mortal can explore.

TO A BIRD.

I'LL not harm thee, no, not I!
Come and try me, come and try,
I'll be quiet as the sky.
See, poor birdie, here's some bread!
Not a feather on your head
Will I ruffle, and when fed
You shall gaily fly away;
If you come another day
I'll be here to bring you more
Of my little steward-store.

I'm no gunner, no, not I!

Why d'ye look at me so sly

Cocking up your little eye?

Sure, 'tis at my umbrella!

Would I had your lovely feather

To keep off the rainy weather!

You seem still in half a puzzle

Thinking 'tis a gun's black muzzle:

I would show you the inside,

But I dare not spread it wide,

For I see your consternation

At the monster-transformation!

So I'll spare your nerves, poor birdie!

I'm no monster, no, not I!

A FRAGMENT.

I LOVE the snow :

And oft have sat all day to see it fall,

Softly and slow :

And when a child

I would give up my play, my food, and all

To watch its whirlings wild :

And since I've grown to man,

Believe it if you can !

When Winter comes I am again a child.

I love the storm:
And with a lover's passion oft have stood
And watched its form
Rise o'er the hill,
And drop its ragged skirts around the wood:
And then my heart stood still
With joy that painful grew
Till bursting in my view,
The lightning's rapture did my bosom fill.

I love the clouds:
And oft with trembling joy have seen them wrap
The stars in shrouds;
Or gaily fold
The sky in robes of every hue and shape,
Vermillion, blue, and gold,
Fantastically wrought
Beyond the power of thought:
How young they made that look which is so old!

THE MOTHER'S PRAYER.

TEND my lily, angels glorious!
In your hands the treasure bear;
Keep the pure from guilt's pollution—
Innocence your constant care.
Then, if living, future beauty
Shall your ministrations own;
And, if dying, yours the flow'ret
Blossoming beneath the Throne.

A FRAGMENT.

All things do make but one great household—God's!
And that is worthiest and most honourable
Which fills its place most worthily, and most
Honors its Maker. Hence the humblest flower
That yields its breath, blessing the summer air,
Is clothed with a respect which the vain lord
In whose broad field Heaven gives it leave to feel
The unobtrusive pleasure of an hour,
Would envy, could he but the honour see
With which the winds do bear it to its grave.

THE DYING DAY.

Beautiful smile of the far-travelled day!
Glimpse of the Infinite, far, far away!
The prison-like wall of yon earth-cloud is riven,
Like a door to some pilgrim just opened in heaven.

My heart has been sad and disturbed in life's war,
But its storms like those cloud-wrecks are rolling afar;
And yon calm open light in the glorified west,
Seems a window of hope to the Infinite rest.

And I fancy I see the white finger of God,
Beckoning forward my soul to that glory-paved road;
And I cry like the seer in his sea-prison, "Come,
"In yon boundless splendour alone is my home."

FLOWERS PRECIOUS TO THE POOR.

Beautiful flowers! who loves your tender bloom?
Not they who pluck you from the simple breast
Of Nature to adorn their mansions proud,
Or boards luxurious. To these ye are
But contributions to the fading show
Of worldly fashion. But unto the poor
Ye are a solace and a daily strength;
To their meek spirits lowly ministering
Like condescending thoughts of God. As if
He who to knowledge and sublimity
Unrolls the starry boundlessness of heaven,
In pity to weak eyes that droop to earth
With ignorance and added weight of cares,
Illuminates the ground with these meek things—
Earth's stars—and says, "Consider these, my child."

A FRAGMENT.

O, LET my eyes ne'er see the vulgar world,
Its show, its meanness, and its mockery!
But let my spirit, bathing in the dawn
That breaks from higher worlds, reflect its light
Upon this outward scene till Life becomes
Apparelled in a glory not its own:
And Death but apprehension more intense
Of THAT which IS; and only to be seen
Clearer as the TO BE; never more REAL.

LOVE THE SUPREME GRACE.

Love is the greatest of the Three, because
It is Divine. Faith is a creature's grace—
Sleep of the soul upon the breast of God.
Like it is Hope—the visions that appear
In its all-conscious rest, of the profound
And ever-brightening glory of the Face
On which it gazes everlastingly;
But Charity is the ethereal spark
That makes us one with Him who is but One.
God cannot trust nor hope—but God *is* Love.

WHAT IS THE DEVIL LIKE?

WHAT IS the Devil like? you ask:
I bid you get a looking-glass!
Study yourself—oh, pleasant task!
And p'raps you'll see the Devil pass.

If you're a master hard of heart,
Making your servants drudge and smart,
Like any horses in your cart,
Then *you* know what the Devil's like.

If you're a friend in surface show,
And all a traitor down below,
And end by rising up a foe,
Then *you* know what the Devil's like.

If you're a base dissembling liar,
Setting peaceful homes on fire,
Exulting in the ruin dire,
Then *you* know what the Devil's like.

If racked with hatred's hellish smart,
And pierced with envy's poisoned dart,
And all a murderer in your heart,
Then *you* know what the Devil's like.

And O, ye devil's brats beware,
Lest he should suddenly appear,
And snatch you God alone knows where!
To shew you *whom* yourselves are like.

TO A LADY ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

(16TH MAY.)

SWEET MAY brings the flowers,
And bright sunny hours,
And birds from far over the sea:
But ne'er did she bear
A burden so fair,
Kind Lady, as when she brought thee!

And always 'tis May
As long as you stay,
And Winter whene'er you depart;
For the sunshine on high,
Falls cold from the sky,
If it flows not through some loving heart.

Through yours if it shine,
All life is divine,
Though the world may be wintry and drear;
We scorn the dull days,
Who sit in the blaze
Of a kindness that lasts all the year.

And may your own life
Be unclouded by strife,
And linger—a long summer day!
And when all your bloom,
Fades away in the tomb,
May you shine where life always is May!

THE DYING GIRL TO HER MOTHER.

Oh, give me your hand, dearest Mother, sweet Mother,
My heart it beats faintly and low;
Once more on my cheek let me feel your lips pressing,
I'm going, dear Mother, I know.

Take my head on your bosom, dear Mother, sweet Mother,
As you used to do long years ago;
That breast was my first, let it be my last pillow,
I'm going, dear Mother, I know.

Death makes us all children again, dearest Mother,
Our strength and our courage brings low;
I'm helpless as when I first lay in thy bosom,
I'm going, dear Mother, I know.

See the moon sinking down 'neath the church, deares
Mother!
How still are the gravestones below!
So hastes the waned orb of my life to its setting,
I'm going, dear Mother, I know.

Oh, see that white stream in the sky, dearest Mother!
It looks like a river of snow;
See, see through the casement, it broadens, it whitens
I'm going, dear Mother, I know.

'Tis the angels—the angels of God, dearest Mother!
The sky it is all of a glow!
O Mother! where art thou? the vision it blinds me!
I'm going, dear Mother, I know.

Oh, fear not these sounds, dearest Mother, sweet Mother,
Nay, let them not startle thee so;
There are none in the room, but the Blest, dearest Mother,
With whom I am going, I know.

And one of them kisses me now, dearest Mother!
My heart it beats faintly and low;
O, spirits, I fear ye no more than my Mother!
I'm going to my Father I know.

THE SOUL.

THE spirit shall return to Him
Who every spirit gave;
For God is the great Spirit-Sea,
And man the refluent wave:

A wave cast up on Time's dark shore,
That knows no place of rest,
Till it has found and lost itself
On the Eternal Breast.

TRUE BEAUTY IS OF THE SOUL.

O TELL me, is not beauty of the soul?
A heavenly light,
That like the dawn is earnest of the whole
Effulgence bright,
Which rises through pure deeds and thoughts divine,
Until the flesh doth like the spirit shine?

Is there not loveliness on which the worm
Hath nought of power?
Which fadeth not though flesh and heart infirm
Droop like a flower?
And though it bears the gathered rime of years,
Recks not the chill of Life's few frozen tears?

Yes, we have seen it, and the withered face
Of hoary age
All blooming with an ever-youthful grace,
Childlike, though sage;
And we have marked the verdure 'neath the rime,
Eternal freshness frosted o'er by Time.

And as the sun drinks up the frozen dew,
And with their tears
Baptizes all the flowers in beauty new,
And Nature cheers,
So melts in Heaven's great light earth's little frost;
Life's dew remains, and but the rime is lost.

ON THE NEW YEAR COMING IN WITH A HEAVY FALL OF SNOW, 1866.

Now is the Virgin Year all veiled in white,
And Winter, like a surpliced Priest doth stand,
For 'tis the marriage of the Year to-night,
And Father Time comes forth to claim her hand:

Old Father Time, who many a year has wed,
Yet moves as sprightly on his lengthening way
As when the world's first blushing Morn he led
To the ambrosial altar of the Day.

Out of the chambers of primeval Night
The rosy virgin came with silvered feet;
The great sun filled the temple with his light,
And all the stars sang hymeneals sweet.

But hark! The bell's clear stroke! The knot is tied!
The signal sounds through all the listening air;
And Father Time leads off his new-made bride—
As modest as her veil of snow, and fair.

Heaven gave her pure, e'en as the snow it lent
Out of its chambers for her bridal dress;
For all things that by Heaven to earth are sent,
Are emblems of its perfect loveliness.

But man defiles them all as soon as given,
Beneath rude feet he treads them in the dust;
And every good and perfect gift of Heaven
Once touching earth—its loveliness is lost.

But God renews the gift, and hides the crime
That marred its holy beauty in his sight,
Covering past years with new-created Time,
And sin with love, as with a robe of white.

Like snow to-night God's charity lets fall
Its sheltering mantle on the sinful past,
And o'er life's fresh-turned page invites us all
To leave the New Year brighter than the last.

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A POEM IN EIGHT BOOKS,

BY

J. WIMSETT BOULDING.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

There is a good deal of ambition about this poem, no lack of ability, and much real thought. Its scope is nothing less than that of a divine epic, having for its subject the work of the INCARNATE SON, beginning with His birth, and ending with His Session at the Right Hand of the Father. In our mind its special merit lies in its thorough realization of the personality of the Evil One, and the conflict of the INCARNATE SON with him, which it brings out with genuine power, as a reality, and not merely as a kind of dramatic *property* brought out to serve a poetic turn. The scene in which Satan tempts our Lord on the Thursday night in Gethsemane is really finely conceived, and the Satanic ingenuity of the Devil's pleadings is very striking. We cannot pledge ourselves for every word of the poem, but so far as we have seen, the analogy of the faith, and sound scriptural exegesis, are both preserved throughout. That the poetic fire scarcely glows in proportion to the dignity of the subject is not saying much in disparagement of the work. And it is the only criticism we feel called upon to make.—*Literary Churchman.*

To sing of Heaven and Hell, of the Angelic Hosts, and of the Armies of Satan, of the Agony in the Garden, the Judgment Seat, the Cross, the Resurrection, the Ascension, in a tone of reverent piety, with language sometimes rising almost to the sublime and rarely sinking to the commonplace, is no small achievement. As a specimen of Mr. Boulding's powers we give the striking passage, descriptive of Satan beholding our Lord's resurrection. Few could have ventured to describe such a scene, still fewer could have done so without a violation of good taste, or a shock to religious feeling. —*John Bull.*

Mr. Boulding maintains throughout the poem an elevated style, and, had we space, we could quote many highly poetical passages.— *Athenæum.*

The poem indicates a considerable amount of sustained power, and no little poetic faculty. Our author knows well the use of words, and well does he make them aid in the expression of his conception. The poem contains passages of no little beauty. It might very well be termed a poetical commentary on the Evangelists. —*Literary World.*

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